

Braeside House
Albert Road, Queen's Park

Glasgow. July 20/67

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My Dear Sir, In a talk with Mr. Villard
this morning I said I would (if I remembered)
leave a note of one or two points of interest
about Oban, which might perhaps be of
use if you were spending a day in the place.

A very lovely view is got from what is called
the Battery Hill - the second height you see above
you walking up from the pier. From this point of
the evening is fine you should see the sun set. The
long island on the other side of the bay is Kerrera
(Gaelic for 'four oars') where Alex. II. died on his
way to encounter Haco of Norway. The great island
beyond, with the dark mountains, is Mull - ^{once the} habitat
of the McLeans & McKinnons. Samuel Johnson
lost his walking-stick on that island. He maintained
that the inhabitants had been tempted to steal it
^{owing to} ~~the~~ the scarcity of timber on the island. There is wood
now at Tolermory; then, there ~~was~~ was none. [In the
island of Lewis further north (an island with 2000
inhabitants) there was neither bush nor tree a foot
high to be seen till St. Jas. Matheson bought the island
a few years since.] The long, low, green island to
the right beyond Brumby Point (I am supposing

You standing on the Battering Hill) is Lisnmore
(Gaelic for 'Large Garden') residence for centuries
of the Bishops of the Isles. Seat also of a
Roman Catholic College. Nothing left now
but a handful of men & a few sheep. I know
a minister on the island who had an overflowing
congregation of 17 souls a few years ago. They have
been diminishing in number year by year; &
the minister lectured the remainder on the
benefits of emigration to America. ~~He~~ He
is in a fair way now of being left, in a year
or two, a pastor in the pastoral sense - with
nothing but a flock of sheep (fourlegged)
to look after. The highlands behind Lisnmore
are the hills of Morven, land of Ossian.

There is a fine & more extensive view to
be had from a ~~the~~ hill top within a mile & a
half (or less) of the great Western Hotel, a
point where the sappers & miners have
erected a beacon. It is perhaps the finest
view near Oban. Very few tourists see it.
The Rev. Mr. Macfarlane, U. K. minister,

(F) This is the finest hotel in the West
Highlands. The Craighard on the hill is
spacious & exceedingly comfortable with a magnificent
view from the windows.

would (if you mentioned your name or if you travel incognito, mine) be delighted to take you to the ~~falls~~ shot.

See Dunolly Castle if you have time. It became the seat of Macdougall of Forn when Bruce drove him from Dunstaffnage of ~~some~~ ^{that castle} to the Campbells who still have it. Macdougall was powerful enough ~~to~~ about that time to encounter & defeat the Scottish King. The Macdougalls retain in their possession a brooch torn from the King's mantle by one of the clan.

Dunstaffnage Castle is three miles from Oban. A fine old ruin, with a burying ground in the wood near it where many of the earlier Kings of Scotland lie ~~buried~~ interred. Two miles further on are the Falls of Connel (Ossian's falls of Lora) - well worth seeing at low water. If you go at high water you will probably see a man fishing lazily in a boat where the falls should be. The falls are calmed at low

water by ~~the~~ Loch Etive discharging itself
into the sea over a low broken reef of
rock that stretches almost across ~~the~~ from
shore to shore.

From the highest point of Kerrera
(you get across to the island by a ferry from
the Gallanach shore) a magnificent
view is to be got of the whole coast
of Lorn, & the islands.

If you have an entire day at Oban
& are not disposed for any of these
walks or drives, you should go to
Staffa & Iona (the steamer starts in
the morning & returns in the evening) or
to Glenelg the scene of the massacre
to which you get from Oban with
equal facility. Excuse me for troubling
you with these hasty notes. They may
turn out of no use after all, but I
thought in the event of your wishing any
solitary rambles they might direct you.

May you have fine weather & much
enjoyment! I shall never forget as long
as I live the delightful hour I spent today with
you & your family. Ever yours David Macrae